

My recent show "Namenloses Grauen" revolved around the possible reasons for denial of depiction. For my second show in this series "Namenloses Grauen II", I have gone in quite the opposite direction of illustration: Or to be more precise and exacting, towards what I call 'Fantasy Illustration'.

I had not made drawings for almost a decade but I had studied it extensively in my youth when I made copies from comics, illustrated song books or did exactly this: fantasy Illustration. I was surprised to find in my hand a whole palette of learned styles, Moebius effects, Beardsley contrasts, floating style nouveau and especially that ugly and disturbing flesh of Metal Hurlant.

Hence forward I would want to sit down and illustrate the Unspeakable Cosmic Horror that dwells amongst us in the few unexplored realms left to our world, the abysmal sea, the arctic regions, the center of the universe and the land beyond the wall of sleep. These Nameless Horrors that will once and for all, hopefully and finally awake to rise and consume our entire world and all that we know of.

Alas, the horror that has of late conquered my mind so effectively is no great behemoth of yonder but the far more profane commitments to rents, bills and the general and incredible extent of discomfort that some people seem compelled to spread around us. Thankfully, my new 'Fantasy Illustrations' do not illustrate the mundane unpleasantness of the unopened letters on my kitchen table.

Instead you are welcome to watch pie charts (which represent different volumes of value, maybe youth, fame or other symbolic or real capital) turn into Viennese Sacher Cakes only to eat each other up or overthrow themselves from the highest extents of a cliff into the deepest depth of the void. These scenes of the utmost cruelty are closely examined by an entity called the Great Old One that appears three times in different grades of contrast. While smoking the pipe downwards one time in another scene the entity is loosing about 20% of its porky pie hat that may also consist partially of Sacher Cake.

In this admittedly brutal fiction of mine where evil effusions of snot condense to forest like networks and thickets even the most idle undertakings like knitting are under acerb observation and if necessary are revised in promptu by People-Who-Know-Better. Some of the pictures show depopulated landscapes with remnants of monuments that were build for reasons long since forgotten. These are the places where the horrible fights have already been fought eons ago or maybe just not yet.

All of my drawings are drawn on specially selected writing papers that were chosen either for their elegant but modest tones and the delicate pavonine finish, or for a color gradient that would deliberately enhance the three dimensional visuality once there would be a drawing on them. Some of these writing papers I mounted on spreads of vacancy notes, called "Alpha – the cadre market of Swiss", that are weekly published by a Swiss newspaper. So the conflicted Viennese Sacher Cakes might as well be quarreling wheels of Swiss cheese.

In the middle of the gallery I assembled a set of three sculptures to anchor the arcade of graphics into the three-dimensional space. These sculptures, though autonomously conceived, nevertheless build the scenery for a small narrative to be unfold that could go like this:

You sit on a chair and there is a marquee that wafts across a light breeze of French Café but it could also be a monochrome picture turned spatial hung over a doorway.

So you idle there and give thought to this orange billboard and the figurine depicted on it: a band of medieval tombraders with firebrands and weaponry and this beautiful vampire that looks like an unexpected mix of Aubrey Beardsley and the shock – headed Peter, – and you wonder why it is that these figurine keep reminding you so much of the people that hang around at your favorite places, when suddenly the Nameless Horror comes in and it makes you sit bolt upright. But this time you had a close escape as it was only a shop sign.

All of this I have only imagined for myself in order to learn how to like it.

It is a world I have chosen to imagine and materialize in artworks for the only reason to place it next to the art I have already done and just to see what happens then.

From now on this is the world I produce my art in and from now on this will be the world I produce my art for.

-Henning Bohl

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